

In Duxbury, DeLuca said, the police department receives the most complaints about speeding. His department has built a second speed trailer to warn speeders, and hopes to be able to build a third trailer. "I think it's a wake-up call for a lot of those people driving," he said. DeLuca is quick to credit his staff with engineering skills necessary to build the trailers. "I'm not the handy one," he laughed. "I'm Italian. Duct tape and a hammer - if you can't fix it with that, it's out of my league."

The police chief said it was up to the discretion of the officer making the traffic stop to decide whether or not a speeder would receive a ticket. The ultimate goal of a traffic stop is to educate the driver, he said, and in many cases a warning can achieve that goal.

DeLuca loves working in Duxbury and appreciates the support the town has given him. He's happy with his staff too, and proud of the way they pitch in.

"They're motivated, and that was evident last year when we were in the middle of the fiscal crisis. A lot of the shifts, a lot of the senior luncheons, a lot of the PAL activities down at the school were covered by our policemen without paying them. They volunteered. They came in and gave their own time to step up and keep the programs going," he said.

DeLuca feels that programs where police interact with children are vital to keep children from growing up intimidated by policemen. But his concern reaches beyond just children: he wants the entire

community, from children to seniors, to feel that the police are approachable. Feedback from the townspeople helps the department know what the community needs.

"You're only as effective as your rapport with the community," he said.

DeLuca noted that working in Duxbury has been quite a change from his former departments in Miami and Boston.

"Maybe two weeks before I came to Duxbury, we got into a foot chase in Southie and we chased the individual up onto the roof. He had a handgun, and we're chasing him across the roofs of Southie. We ended up catching him down on the ground somewhere. Two weeks after that, I was driving to work in Duxbury, and as I'm driving down Route 14 the sprinklers go on at the bogs. And I just had culture shock. It was a huge transition. It was a good one, but what culture shock."

The Clipper Visits... Chief Mark DeLuca

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"It was a unique program because there were no winners or losers. You went out, you boxed, everybody wins. So the whole idea of the program was to build the kids' self-esteem. Not even so much to teach them how to box, but to teach them to respect people... To this day we still don't have winners or losers, everyone shakes hands before and after and that's it," he said.

DeLuca loved boxing so much he stayed with it through his childhood and teen years. In 1982, at the age of 24, he became a professional boxer. His first and only professional fight in Massachusetts earned him the Golden Gloves. Shortly after, he moved to Miami to become a policeman.

"Boxing...was never really a career. It was just something to pass the time. I always wanted to be a policeman," he said.

During the next two years in Miami, where he served on the SWAT team, he had three pro fights. He stopped boxing professionally in 1984. Boxing was taking time away from his real job, and he found he couldn't do both.

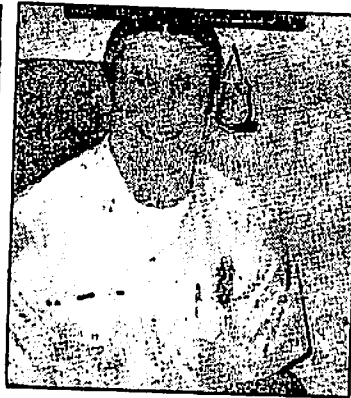
"You can't fake boxing," he said. "You've got to do it or not do it. There's no in between. My heart wasn't in it any longer and I enjoyed the police work. It was something I had enough of and I moved on."

In 1987, he returned to Massachusetts to join the Boston police force. While with the Boston Police, DeLuca served in South Boston, Roxbury, and Downtown Boston.

Of DeLuca's five children, three sons and one daughter box now, too. Mark, 15, has been the national champion for two years; Matthew, 13, has won the New England Silver Mittens and won in last year's Ohio State Fair, which made him a national champion; and Zach, 10, also won at the Ohio State Fair, has won at the Junior Olympics and has won the Silver Mittens. Rachel, 9, is learning to box and training at the gym, in addition to being a cheerleader and playing basketball, and Ally, 8, is a cheerleader and gymnast.

"They do really well," the proud father said.

DeLuca, 45, is not completely out of the boxing scene himself. After serving as the Massachusetts State Boxing Commissioner in the late 1990s, he opened the South Shore Police Athletic League in Quincy with Derek Barnes, where approximately 100 children are enrolled. Also, he and his brothers now run the



Police Chief Mark DeLuca

boxing program in Dorchester where he learned to box.

In his spare time, he works with the Duxbury Police Athletic League at the high school, although boxing is not offered there now, and just finished his ninth year coaching the Weymouth Pop Warner football league that two of his sons play in and his daughters cheer for.

"That keeps us pretty busy from August through November," he said.

DeLuca has served as Duxbury's police chief since 1999, coming here straight from the Boston police department.